

Ida Limonova With Her Mother Rosalia Sneiderman



My mother Rosalia Sneiderman and I on my 11th birthday. The photo was taken at the Krasnaya svetopis photoshop in Kharkov in 1925. My mother, Rosalia Sneiderman [nee Gelbartovich], was born in Kharkov in 1888. Kharkov was a big industrial, commercial and financial center. Jews held key positions in the finances, in trade, medicine and publishing. New synagogues were built at the beginning of the 20th century; the biggest one of them was the choral synagogue. My parents met in Kharkov. My father was playing at a wedding and the bridegroom was my mother's friend. My father talked with my mother a little. They got married in Kharkov in 1908. They had a chuppah and my father's friends played music at the wedding. The newly-weds lived with my mother's parents. My father worked as a locksmith and played in a brass band; my mother helped my grandmother about the house. My mother was a housewife and took care of the children. She also cooked meals for students. There was an institute not far from our house and students came to buy

an inexpensive and delicious homemade meal. I believe this was kosher food, because this was the only way all food was cooked in our house. My mother also did some sewing to make some extra money. She did this when the family needed it badly. When my father could provide for the family she returned to her housekeeping duties. I was born on 26th August 1914. I went to a Russian secondary school because Jewish schools were all closed in the late 1920s. The school I went to was in a one-bedroom apartment. There were very few children that formed 5 classes and there was only one teacher. All children were sitting in one room and the teacher went from one group of children to the other handing out exercises. The school was soon closed and I went to another school, rather far from our home. There was an Armenian school on the first floor, and we studied on the second floor at a lower secondary school [7 years of studies]. We studied mathematics, physics, Russian, history, geography and botany. In 1924 I became a pioneer. My parents didn't mind me becoming a pioneer, but my grandfather was upset that I wouldn't be able to attend the synagogue any longer. We continued to celebrate all Jewish holidays at home. In 1925 we moved to another apartment. There was a living room in this apartment where I also slept, my parents' bedroom; and my grandfather and Izia had small rooms of their own. There were four apartments in this house. There was another Jewish family living in the house, a Russian family and our landlord, Gregory Bagancha, a Ukrainian. My father and he were good friends. My father gave him a hand with all his construction projects: he helped him to make a verandah for example. Gregory was married, but he didn't have children. They invited our family to join them for Christian holidays: Christmas, St. Trinity Day, and so on. They weren't religious, but they celebrated these holidays as a tribute to old tradition. They made all kinds of traditional food and we celebrated enjoying the company and the food. I went to the 5th grade at the Russian school near our new home. This school was an old two-storied building. It had a canteen where children were shop assistants and each of us waited for his turn to sell cookies, candy and stationery.